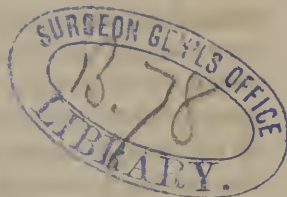


Schieferdecker (G. G.)



HINTS

ABOUT THE PROPER TREATMENT OF TYPHUS:

A LETTER TO AN INQUIRING FRIEND,

By C. C. SCHIEFERDECKER, M. D.

108 East 24th st., Jan. 16th, 1864.

DEAR SIR:

It seems impossible to let so many young and valuable lives sink into the grave, while they might be certainly saved, without protesting against the one-sided and heartless self-sufficiency to which they fall victims.

The typhus has become, within the last four to five decennies, not only more general, but also more dangerous and complicated. I am not inclined to press my conviction, that the most infamous crime of our age—"Vaccination"—is the cause of its spreading and greater danger, although analysis shows identity between the virus of pox matter and of the exudation of the inner eruption, while it is an acknowledged fact that the single forms of cutaneous eruptions stand in intimate relation with certain internal parts of the organism, viz.: *Small-pox* with the *mucous membranes of the stomach and intestinal canal*; *scarlet* with the *membranes of the back part of the mouth*; *measles* with the *respiratory organs*; *erysipelas* with the *liver*; *scarlet* with the *kidneys*, &c.

The object of these lines is merely to show to you how un-

warrantable the proceedings of physicians are, "who," as Johnson, Sir Chas. Soudamore, Mayo, Forbes, and a hundred other eminent physicians say, "from the mere pride of prejudice, refuse to adopt the *safe, sensible, simple, intelligible, and successful treatment* with water and proper diet. They incur a fearful responsibility, the amount of which, time will certainly reveal, if not to themselves, at least to their successors. For nothing can prevent it from becoming *ultimately* universal."

Drs. Edwd. Johnson, with his sons Walter and Howard, of whom the elder, Walter, holds the appointment of Medical Tutor in the largest and wealthiest London hospital—Guy's—add, referring to Drs. Graves, Gregory, Watson, Copland, Waitz (Batavia), Mauthner, Schnitzlein, Richter, Herschel, Scouttetten, Champouillon, and others :

"All that can be expected, and all that the sensible physician ever does expect, in typhus and similar cases, from *any* treatment, is to pilot the ship through the storm, and bring it safely into harbor. And it (the water treatment) will effect this object with a degree of certainty a hundred-fold greater than any other, and the convalescence after it will be wonderfully more rapid, while all those lasting and evil consequences which too often result, from the ordinary drug-practice, to the constitution, will be avoided."

The very eminent, learned, and practical Dr. Currie, of Liverpool, brings (long before the present development of the hydro-pathic system as a perfect science), in his "Medical Reports," a mass of evidence, in form of actual cases, treated by himself and others, which one would have thought could not possibly have failed to force the water-treatment into general acceptance ; the more especially as Dr. Currie is a man universally acknowledged to occupy a place in the very foremost rank of his profession. Every honest medical man ought to read, among the numerous cases, detailed with great minuteness, in the Medical Reports, at least one, perhaps that communicated by Mr. Dalrymple, of Norwich. (*Vide* Currie's Medical Reports, vol. 2, page 27, second edition, 1805.)

Thos. Bateman, M. D., F. L. S., in "A Practical Synopsis of Cutaneous Diseases," remarks : "After the extensive evidence which a period of more than twenty years has furnished in proof

of the uniform efficacy and security of the external use of cold water, in scarlatina, and in other febrile diseases, connected with high morbid heat of the skin, it is to be lamented *that some practitioners still look upon the practice as an experiment; and repeat the remnants of exploded hypotheses*, about repelling morbid matter, stopping pores, etc., as reasons for resisting the testimony of some of the greatest ornaments of the medical profession. For my own part, I have been in the constant habit of resorting to the practice, at every opportunity, in scarlatina, (and in typhoid fevers, during my superintendence of the fever institution for the last ten years), attending to the simple rules laid down by Dr. Currie; and I have *never* witnessed any inconvenience, much less any injury from it; *but an uniformity in its beneficial operation, of which no other physical expedient, with which I am acquainted, affords an example.*"

Sundelin, Von Siebold, Balling, Most, and a host of other most eminent physicians, highly recommend water in typhus.

Dr. C. E. Bock (the celebrated Professor of Pathological Anatomy in Leipzig), in his "Diagnostic," &c., declares all Specifica and Medications in Typhus as "*unphysiologically*" objectionable; and adds, "that all rational treatment of the typhus, as of all other dyscrasias, must have in view, *to support properly the metamorphosis of the blood, and to remove troublesome symptoms.* Experience teaches, that, with proper dietetics, far more typhus patients are restored, and quicker strengthened, than with drug-medication and stimulation. But a proper dietetic treatment consists *in giving a mild, mostly fluid food*, (alternating between milk, butter-milk, bread, egg-drink, meat broth), *in keeping the air day and night fresh and pure; in most scrupulous cleanliness of clothes, bed and person* (washing and baths); *in preventing all excitement of body, senses and mind; in proper attention to the excretions*, particularly of the cutaneous activity by baths, urine by cathetre and stool by enemata. Against violent headache, apply cold wet compresses to the head. Excessive bleedings remove rather by cold applications, than by lead, alumn and acids; the intestinal bleeding by cold injections, and cold compresses to the abdomen; great sensitiveness and swelling of abdomen removed by warm fomentations; keep the body from getting sore by a good bed and

cold washings; the dryness and covering of lips and mouth can easily be corrected by keeping these parts clean and moist with water."

Dr. H. E. Richter (Professor, &c., in Dresden), after giving his views on prophylactics (here so much neglected, as if, to say the least, unknown), remarks: "We have in vain hunted for a specificum in typhus. We are bound to a dietetic treatment. Fluids only can be given; wine and eggs in cases of extreme exhaustion. Room well aired and cool; windows open day and night, and some fire. Cleanliness in every respect. Wash body often, or bath, or pour pure water over it. By dry skin pack in wet sheet. Wash forehead, face, arms and legs with vinegar, or such packs are beneficial, derivative, quieting and sudorific. All excitement to be avoided." "The internal and external use of *cold water* is not only cooling, refreshing, antifebrile and energetically contracting, but is also a most important skin-irritant, derivative and crisis-promoting means, and gives us in typhus now, since the development of the water cure as a scientific system, a far more extensive applicability than before. We have now systematically circumscribed: Cold immersions, cold affusions (particularly on the head in stupor); packing of naked body in wet sheets (particularly in dry heat of the body); local baths of many kinds; half baths of different temperature; cooling or warming cold water-compresses (particularly ice-cold ones on the abdomen in meteorismus); tepid or cold local or general washings, &c."

The "Encyclopædic Dictionary of the Medical Sciences," edited by the Professors of the Medical Faculty in Berlin (viz.: C. F. v. Graefe, Hufeland, Link, Rndolphi, Von Siebold, Bush, Horn, Ossan, Hecker, Müller, Jungken, and other authoritative giants of the Medical Profession), says, in vol. 34, under the head of Typhus: "According to our insufficient knowledge of the nature of the typhus, the following is left for us to do:

"1. *Restriction of the typhus-process*, by cold, pure air, cleansing of the skin. The typhus of 1813 has shown this to the utmost extent. Cold rooms, light covering, cold drink, cold washings and baths are the principal means for the extraction of the heat so much roused by this disease. Cold drinks, cold wash-

ings, cold douches and affusions had the best effect. Those whose heads had become freer, desired to remain in the cold room, asked for cold drink and cold head-compresses. Coldness helps to cure, and to diminish the contagion.—This proceeding is proper as long as dry heat, stupor, delirium, &c., exist. When the heat is diminished, and the skin becomes soft, we have to moderate the first treatment, and pass to a more moderate temperature, but with the greatest caution.

“2d. *Limitation of the congestion of the blood to the head, chest, and abdomen. Prevention of inflammation.*—Warm rooms, warm covering, warm drinks, and stimulating means, cause these congestions, and are injurious. External cold applications, washing, and cold compresses, are here also the best remedies. To prevent congestions to head and brain, the means are ice-cold fomentations, cold washings, affusions with cold water and cold douch-baths, partly in dry bathing-tubs, partly in tepid half-baths. Of all agents these are the best, most powerful and *indispensable*. It is proper to continue energetically these extractions of warmth and diminutions of blood-congestions, till the sopor, delirium, dry-heat, &c., are removed. The head compresses must be renewed when ceasing to be cold. Another cold compress is to be applied to the back and neck, but they must not be too heavy. The washings with ice-cold water are to be made with a sponge, and continued as long as the skin is hot and dry. The addition of vinegar, chloride of lime, or wine, is not essential, for very cold water is sufficient. The cold affusions of the patient, while in a tepid half-bath, daily two or three times repeated for four to five days, are *invaluable*. The majority of those who suffered from severe typhus, have been successfully treated with these cold agents, and few only were restored without them.” The writer then mentions: “That in certain cases more moderate temperatures of the water were used; but in most cases of typhus with severe affections of the head, *tepid water is too feeble an agent*. Baths are needed for the after-cure to support the convalescence, and to strengthen the organism. This continuation of the use of baths is particularly necessary in hospitals, to exterminate the contagion. It is to be recommended as *prophylactic* and as a *sanitary duty*.”

There are only few cases where bleeding is not injurious. *Cathartics* and *cooling drugs* are only relatively useful, but mostly injurious. We must care for a daily evacuation. *Vomitives* are of no value, and do often harm. *Calomel* has been recommended and condemned. *Acids* are pleasant, but do not influence a cure. As to *Chlor* (acidum muriaticum oxygenatum) its effect is overrated; and cleanliness, water, fresh air, are much more important and necessary, than the mass of fumigations so apt to cause cough, oppression, and pain.

3. *Limitation of such symptoms*, which by their continuation become dangerous, and prevent the crisis, viz.: Bleedings, diarrhoea, cramps, pains, gangrene, &c. *Bleeding*, (if not a critical symptom) treated with ice-cold compresses and injections, cold affusions, and douches. Metrorrhagia, cold fomentations, injections, affusions on abdomen and sexual organs with cold water, &c.

4. *Promotion of the crisis*, prevention of after diseases and new infections. Baths, baths, baths! Fresh air and proper diet.

In regard to the use of wine and similar stimulants, it is said: "*Far better is the entire exclusion of wine than its abuse.*"

These rather heroic recommendations are not made by any follower of the scientifically established water-cure system; they come from the heads of the Allopathic drug-profession, which scowls at hydropathy in this country; the American Allopathist rather than do honor to his own masters, kills, by drug and dietetic abuse, his victims, or lets them die without applying the means proved and recommended as successful by his teachers. "But what would I do in case of Typhus?" I answer by describing the treatment of Dr. C. A. W. Richter, Berlin, whose work on Typhus has been honored by receiving the prize from the Medical Faculty in 1848. He says:

"A timely and proper exhibition of cold water will frequently prevent the breaking out of the disease, particularly when it is spreading by contagion. If an individual, exposed to the danger of infection, shows, by the fact of being easily fatigued, and by

head-aches, vertigo, &c., the signs of being infected, we must proceed thus :

“The patient is entirely undressed and put into a dry bathing-tub or on the bare floor ; five to six pails of cold water are then, with moderate pressure, from a height of two to three feet, poured over head, neck and shoulders. This procedure is repeated after five to six hours—and four to five such affusions are generally sufficient to remove all impending danger.”

But when the disease is broken out, we cannot stay its progress by this treatment ; it runs its course.

Treatment of the disease itself:—The patient is, at the time of exacerbation, towards evening, packed in a cold wet sheet, in which he remains till he is slightly warm ; he then enters a half bath of 68° F., and stays while moderately rubbed, four to six minutes. When dried he receives a wet bandage on the abdomen, his legs are bandaged, and the head is surrounded by a cooling wet compress, to be renewed when getting warm. In the first days, when the bowels are generally constipated, we procure every 24 hours a passage by a large injection. Besides this, we give daily two small cold injections, which influence advantageously the afterwards following diarrhœa. The patient is again packed in the morning, bathed and bandaged as above ; the proceeding is repeated in the evening. If on the sixth and 7th day diarrhœa supervenes, we give in the day, between the two packs, a sitz-bath of 65° F. for ten to fifteen minutes, and envelope the patient after it up to under the arms with a thick woollen blanket. About the ninth or tenth day, or earlier, if before this indications of spontaneous perspirations should appear, we let the patient, by degrees, remain longer in the wet pack, till his face gets slightly red and the temporal pulsation quicker ; we then bring him quickly into a bath of 68° F., and have him, for three to five minutes from a moderate height, affused from the mouth of a large and repeatedly filled watering-pot, or from a shower-bath. He sleeps, when brought to bed, generally very soon after this bath, and begins to perspire. This perspiration should be supported for three to four hours by drinking from time to time a small swallow of fresh water ; if the sweat spontaneously ceases to flow, we quickly moisten the

body with a wet cloth on head, chest, extremities, and cover it again quickly and carefully with the bed covering; the perspiration then generally begins again to flow. Finally, when he ceases to perspire, we bring him into a bath of 75° F., and then into the bed, when he will again sleep and perspire.

When the patient awakes from this sleep, he feels like another being, and makes the impression of his change upon those who surround him; his head is free, he can control his members, and all apathy has passed. His friends perceive the clear, lively expression of his eyes and of his features. Patient is now only packed and bathed in the morning, in the evening he is merely washed off, but he continues to wear the abdominal bandage, which is renewed several times during the day."

With this method of treating the Typhus, which, since the publication of his "*crowned*" work on this disease, has been introduced into the hospital and private practice of physicians, Dr. Richter had restored some 90 typhus patients, among whom were some nearly "in agony," and given up by other physicians."

I myself have had some cases which I cured in a similar manner. But what shall we think of physicians of some reputation, who either know the above indicated facts and stubbornly stick to their murderous nonsense, or are really ignorant of those facts? Are they worthy of their sacred position, and of any confidence of the public whatever?

Yours truly,

Dr. C. C. SCHIEFLERDECKER.